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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2017  
TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL ASEC FJ  
SUBJECT: MILITARY SHUTS DOWN ANTI-COUP BLOG

Classified By: Charge Ted Mann for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Late Wednesday afternoon one of the most strident blogs criticizing Fiji's post-coup interim government was shut down. This follows days of threats by the military to shut down the blogs. A pro-coup blog site has been involved with attempting to locate the authors of the blog. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The Fiji Military apparently succeeded Wednesday in shutting down one of the most prominent of the anti-coup Internet websites logs (blogs) that have proliferated in the wake of December's coup. The "ResistFranksCoup" website ([www.resistfrankscoup.blogspot.com](http://www.resistfrankscoup.blogspot.com)), which Tuesday morning joined in the chorus of bloggers cynically making light of the military's recent vain attempts to shut them down, was stripped of content and left as a shell without text and later removed from the web sometime late Tuesday afternoon. ResistFranksCoup (RFC) is one of 21 blogs agitating on the Internet against the military and the Interim government. In a May 14 posting, an RFC contributor had egged on the military to "Catch us if you can when we are in Fiji this week ... or come here to the USA, and we will teach you how to log on to a computer." However, up until now it has been uncertain where the authors of the RFC and the others are located.

¶3. (SBU) Early this week, Fiji's international telecom carrier FINTEL confirmed to the media that representatives of the Fiji military asked FINTEL to block local access to certain overseas-based blogs. (Note: The embassy is tracking 21 anti-coup blogs dedicated to the current situation in Fiji. All but four of the blogs are hosted by the US-based "Blogger.com" hosting site, owned by Google. End note.) According to media reports, FINTEL was resisting the military's attempts to restrict or shut out the blogs. Military spokesman Leweni said the bloggers' attacks on the military and the interim regime are a "threat to national security."

¶4. (SBU) After an initial, unsuccessful attempt some months ago to identify the sources of the blogs and shut them down, the military announced it would ignore them instead. However, the blogs have become increasingly cutting in their criticism of the military and, more importantly, are attracting far more attention in the meanwhile. RFC alone had claimed some 20,000 hits per month (Comment: very possibly exaggerated). According to an embassy contact, only the blog author himself, a talented hacker or Blogger.com could have stripped content from the RFC website.

¶5. (C) A posting on a pro-military website entitled

"ResistRFC.blogspot.com" dated today claimed to have identified one of the RFC blog's "administrators" as Seini Lutu, a former Fiji Human Rights Commission employee and current Greenpeace campaigner. (Note: in actuality the Seini working for Greenpeace has a different last name). The ResistRFC website has for several days been threatening to track down the authors of RFC and give the information to the military. They have published hacking-type information about location, folders, and browsers. When contacted by Emboff, Greenpeace vehemently denied that their political advisor Seini Nabua has anything to do with the blogs.

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